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ABSTRACT

Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes (Project New Horizons) at James Monroe High School (New York City) served 328 students of limited English proficiency (LEP) in grades 9-12 during the final year of a 3-year funding cycle. The project's purpose was to build on the strengths of the school's extensive computer-assisted instructional program in order to develop instructional software and provide individualized computer-assisted instruction to supplement the bilingual education program. The bilingual education program consisted of English as a Second Language (ESL), native language arts (NLA), and bilingually taught content area and business courses. Students were recent arrivals from Spanish-speaking countries. Half the students left the program within a year, and one-third stayed for 2 years. The project met its objectives in ESL, NLA, content area subjects, computer-assisted instruction, and attendance. The program did not provide data for assessing cultural heritage appreciation, staff development, or parental involvement objectives. The program's chief accomplishment was acquisition of appropriate instructional software in NLA and the content areas. Recommendations for improvement include: (1) increased contacts between bilingual and mainstream students through sponsored extracurricular activities; (2) development of ways to motivate students to rapidly enter the mainstream; and (3) gathering of data needed to evaluate all non-instructional objectives. (MSE)

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OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

NUEVOS HORIZONTES

JAMES MONROE HIGH SCHOOL

1987-1988

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EVALUATION SECTION

John Schoener, Chief Administrator

June 1989

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

NUEVOS HORIZONTES

JAMES MONROE HIGH SCHOOL

1987-1988

Prepared by
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NUEVOS HORIZONTES
JAMES MONROE HIGH SCHOOL*
1987-88

SUMMARY

- Project Nuevos Horizontes was fully implemented for the 1987-88 academic year.

- The project met its objectives in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), native language arts (N.L.A.), content area subjects, computer-assisted instruction, and attendance. The program did not provide data to assess the cultural heritage appreciation, staff development, and parental involvement objectives.

James Monroe High School's Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes (Project New Horizons) served 328 students of limited English proficiency (LEP) in grades nine through 12 during the final year of a three-year Title VII funding cycle. Its purpose was to build on the strengths of Monroe's extensive computer-assisted instructional program in order to develop instructional software materials and to provide individualized computer-assisted instruction to supplement Monroe's bilingual program, which consisted of E.S.L., N.L.A., and bilingually taught content area and business courses.

Project students were recent arrivals from Spanish-speaking countries in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. Half of those participating left the program after one year, sometimes to return to their native countries. One third stayed in the program for two years. Students were selected for the program based on a score in the 21st percentile or below on the English LAB.

Project personnel administered the English LAB in early fall and at the end of the Spring semester to determine students' progress in English. The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) examined project students' passing rates for content area and business courses, their performance on the LAB, and attendance data provided by the school and the project. An OREA field consultant obtained information concerning the project's performance pertaining to curriculum and software development, staff development, parent outreach, and extracurricular activities goals from interviews with the project coordinator and other school personnel, and from classroom observations.

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*This summary is based on the final evaluation of the "Nuevos Horizontes at James Monroe High School 1987-88" prepared by the OREA Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit.

The project's chief new accomplishment in the 1987-88 year, over and above the achievements of the previous year, was the acquisition of appropriate instructional software in N.L.A. and in the content areas.

Project Nuevos Horizontes met its objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., content area subjects, computer-assisted instruction, and attendance. In addition, the project provided students with many activities to enrich their awareness of their heritage, although the precise impact of these could not easily be assessed by any quantitative measure. Although it conducted many staff development activities, lack of data in the form of records made it impossible to assess whether the project attained its goals in this area, and similarly, in the area of parental involvement.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- To increase contacts between bilingual and mainstream students, the project should consider sponsoring extracurricular activities that would bring together students from both groups.
- Develop ways to motivate students to rapidly enter the mainstream.
- Supply the data needed to evaluate all of the noninstructional objectives.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 1987-88 Project Nuevos Horizontes completed the third year of its Title VII funding at James Monroe High School.

James Monroe is located in the South Bronx, one of New York City's most impoverished neighborhoods.

This year, over 98 percent of Monroe's students were native speakers of Spanish. Three hundred and fifty-two (31 percent) of Monroe's 1,144 Hispanic students were limited English proficient (LEP).

Nuevos Horizontes' goals were: to improve the English-language skills of LEP students so they could be mainstreamed, while also providing them with content area courses taught bilingually; to develop a computer-assisted instructional program to reinforce students' skills in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), the native language, and content area subjects; to provide business education classes; to foster pride in the students' ethnic heritage while at the same time developing their understanding of and appreciation for American culture and values; and to maintain a high attendance level.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

ORGANIZATION

Monroe's bilingual program was decentralized. The assistant principal (A.P.) for E.S.L./foreign languages supervised E.S.L. and native language teachers and paraprofessionals, as well as the Title VII staff. Individual department A.P.s supervised the program's mathematics, science, and social studies teachers.

Staff members and the principal strongly supported this arrangement. The principal said he had proposed to centralize the program when he first came to the school, but staff opposition was so strong that he changed his mind. The principal said he was glad he had, because he realized how necessary decentralization was for integrating bilingual with mainstream curricula.

STAFF

Title VII staff consisted of a project coordinator, funded on a half-time basis, a resource specialist, an educational assistant, and a teaching assistant, all funded full-time.

The project coordinator and the bilingual resource specialist had master's degrees.

All Title VII staff members' careers had been entirely in bilingual education. The project coordinator had 14 years of experience, the resource specialist seven years, the educational assistant one year, and the family assistant 12 years. All

spoke Spanish.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Many students, particularly those from the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, and some from Puerto Rico were illiterate or semiliterate in Spanish when they arrived in this country. Some students had had just one or two years of primary schooling when they entered the United States. Despite these deficiencies, the school placed all students according to their age.

This year Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes served a total of 328 students. The majority of those who left the program during the fall did so because they were leaving the country.

Of the 289 students for whom the project provided data, 143 (50 percent) participated in the project for one year or less, 87 (30 percent) participated for two years, and 59 (20 percent) had participated for three years.

Although a growing number came from Central and South America, students from the Caribbean still predominated. (See Table 1.) Of the 322 students for whom there were age and grade data, 64 percent were in grades nine and ten. (See Table 2.)

A review of the students' educational background by grade shows that the students' mean number of years of schooling in the native country was 7.8 while the mean number of years of education in the United States was 2.4. The latter is consistent with a recently arrived population.

TABLE 1

Number and Percent of Program Students by Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Number	Percent
Puerto Rico	128	39.4
Dominican Republic	86	26.5
Ecuador	26	8.0
Honduras	25	7.7
U.S.A.	14	4.3
Nicaragua	12	3.7
Mexico	9	2.8
El Salvador	5	1.5
Haiti	4	1.2
Colombia	4	1.2
Peru	4	1.2
Guatemala	3	.9
Cuba	1	.3
Costa Rica	1	.3
Panama	1	.3
Vietnam	1	.3
Other Asian	1	.3
U.S.A.	14	4.3
TOTAL	325[a]	99.9[b]

[a]Data were missing for three cases.

[b]Total does not equal 100 percent because of rounding.

- Sixty-six percent of participating students were born in either Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic.

TABLE 2

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
13	2	1			3
14	10	2			12
15	16	13			29
16	31	32	13	4	80
17	25	34	26	9	94
18	6	18	15	13	52
19	5	8	6	13	32
20	2	1	4	10	17
21		1		2	3
Total	97	110	64	51	322*

Overage Students	Program-Wide				
Number	69	62	25	25	181
Percent	71.1	56.4	39.1	49.0	56.2

Note: Shaded boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

*Data were missing for six students.

- More than half of the participating students were overage for their grade.

MAINSTREAMING

Performance on the English version of the Language Assessment Battery (LAB)* and teacher recommendations determined mainstreaming decisions. For the most part, mainstreaming was a gradual process, with students taking more English-only classes as their performance on the LAB improved. Of course, as per Board of Education regulations, parents could opt out of the bilingual program whenever they chose and have their child take E.S.L. and English-only content area classes instead.

Most students stayed in the program for two years. Nuevos Horizontes allowed mainstreamed students to participate in project-sponsored activities and followed their progress by reviewing report cards and interviewing them and their teachers. Most mainstreamed students performed well, with some of them included among the top ten graduates each year. This year, the first-, second-, and fourth-ranking Monroe seniors were Nuevos Horizontes students. The project coordinator estimated that about 90 percent of former program students had been accepted by postsecondary schools and that approximately two percent had received special honors or scholarships.

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*The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was developed by the Board of Education of the City of New York to measure the English-language proficiency of nonnative speakers of English in order to determine whether their level of English proficiency is sufficient to enable them to participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB are entitled to bilingual and E.S.L. services.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) evaluated the program by looking at students' performance in courses and tests, reviewing program records, interviewing school and project personnel, and observing classes.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Nuevos Horizontes proposed instructional objectives in E.S.L.; N.L.A.; the content area subjects of social studies, science, and mathematics and computer-assisted instruction.

English as a Second Language

- As a result of participating in the program, E.S.L. students will make statistically significant gains in English language proficiency as measured by the Language Assessment Battery.

Monroe provided the following levels of E.S.L. classes: elementary, intermediate, advanced, and transitional. Project students received a minimum of two periods of E.S.L. per day. Beginning E.S.L. students received either two or three periods of English instruction daily.

The A.P. of E.S.L./foreign languages said that curriculum and instruction for tax-levy and Chapter 1-funded E.S.L. classes were complementary in terms of curriculum and instruction. Teachers could develop new materials or adapt existing ones as long as they got the A.P.'s approval.

An E.S.L. staff development specialist visited Monroe at least once a week. During these visits she observed classes, met with teachers to suggest improved teaching techniques,

brought samples of new curricular materials, gave demonstration lessons, addressed departmental conferences, and met with the A.P. to discuss how to improve instruction.

The A.P. also observed teachers, held post-observation conferences with them, and organized staff development workshops and conferences.

Student Achievement in E.S.L. To assess students' achievement in English, a correlated t-test and effect sizes* were computed on students' N.C.E.** scores on the LAB. The t-test determines whether the difference between pretest and posttest mean scores is significantly greater than would be expected from chance variation alone.

Complete LAB pretest and posttest N.C.E. scores were available for 169 students. The results show that program students at all grade levels made significant gains in their LAB scores. (See Table 3.)

Nuevos Horizontes met its E.S.L. objective. Concomitant

*The effect size, developed by Jacob Cohen, is a ratio of the mean gain to the standard deviation of the gain. This ratio provides an index of improvement in standard deviation units irrespective of the size of the sample. Effect size (E.S.) is interpreted to indicate educational meaningfulness, and an E.S. of .80 is thought to be highly meaningful, while one of .20 is considered to be only slightly so.

**Raw scores were converted to N.C.E. scores, which are normalized standard scores. They have the advantage of forming an equal interval scale so that scores and gains can be averaged. For the norming population, N.C.E.s have a mean of 50, a standard deviation of approximately 20, and a range from one to 99. Scores can be compared to the norming population.

TABLE 3

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences on the Language Assessment Battery, by Grade

Grade	Number of Students	Pretest Mean	Pretest S.D.	Posttest Mean	Posttest S.D.	Difference Mean	Difference S.D.	t Value	Effect Size
9	63	7.7	9.2	10.1	9.7	2.4	7.8	2.43*	.31
10	49	9.7	10.3	14.3	12.3	4.6	9.9	3.29*	.46
11	41	10.5	10.2	14.1	10.7	3.6	9.0	2.56*	.40
12	16	8.5	2.1	12.2	9.3	3.7	6.9	2.14*	.54
TOTAL	169	9.0	9.7	12.5	10.8	3.5	8.7	5.20*	.40

* $p<.05$

- Students at all grade levels made significant posttest gains.

effect sizes ranged from .31 to .54 for an overall value of .40, which is interpreted as of small educational meaningfulness.

Native Language Arts

- As a result of participating in the program, at least 70 percent of the students will score at or above the 65 percent criterion in native language arts classes.

Monroe offered program students Spanish courses, ranging from elementary to advanced placement, and included two Caribbean studies courses. All courses had units on Hispanic culture, with the more advanced ones stressing literature.

An OREA field consultant observed intermediate and advanced N.L.A. classes. One intermediate class was on pre-Columbian civilizations, particularly on the foods of the Mayas, the Aztecs, and the Incas. The students used their textbooks to answer a series of questions the teacher had written on the blackboard. After going over these questions, the teacher asked several more, and then she called on individual students to answer them.

The aim of the advanced Spanish class was to analyze Ana Maria Matute's "Fiesta al Noroeste," a short story which examines how social class determines the differing childhood experiences of two boys. First the teacher had the students clarify their thoughts by writing a few paragraphs, and then she called on them to discuss their ideas. The students' analyses contained a great deal of information and insights drawn from their personal experience. They clearly were very interested, and they participated enthusiastically. The teacher guided the

discussion.

Student Achievement in Native Language Arts. Students enrolled in N.L.A. classes achieved passing rates of 89 percent in the fall and a 95 percent in the spring. Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes met its N.L.A. objective.

CONTENT AREA SUBJECTS

- At least 65 percent of the students will score at or above the 65 percent criterion in social studies, science, and mathematics.

Monroe offered a total of 19 bilingual content area classes in global history, American studies, general science, biology, fundamental math, and sequential math. There were 19 teachers and no educational assistants.

In the general science class which the field consultant observed, the teacher spoke Spanish fluently. The class's aim was to review kinetic theory. The teacher wrote a series of fill-in questions on the blackboard. Although the teacher had organized the lesson well, the students continually spoke among themselves and called out answers and questions without raising their hands. The teacher frequently had to interrupt the lesson to establish order. The class was mostly in Spanish, but the teacher sometimes used English to give instructions, establish discipline, and deliver explanations.

The aim of the global history class was to explain Japanese expansionism between 1875 and 1900. The teacher began the class by asking students several questions on the domestic causes and consequences of Japanese imperialism. Students referred to a

Spanish version of Afro-Asian Culture Studies to answer them. The teacher then led a discussion built on these questions. He concluded his lesson by summarizing the conclusions reached by the class.

Student Achievement in Content Area Subjects. The project met its content area subjects objective. The overall passing rates of 81 percent for the fall and 78 percent for the spring were well above the project's objective of a 65 percent passing rate. Students were stronger in social studies and science than they were in mathematics. (See Table 4.)

Computer-Assisted Instruction

- Title VII funds will be used to supplement the computer already existing at James Monroe and will provide LEP students with more time on the actual use of computers.
- Computer-assisted instruction will be used to reinforce skills for E.S.L., native language arts, and content area instruction.
- Computer-assisted instruction will be supplemented by a minimum of one period per week in the computer resource lab. Computer-assisted course work will be purchased and translated if necessary. A resource teacher will select appropriate software and prepare a schedule for the use of the computer resource lab.
- By the end of the third project year, the resource teachers will have developed sample lesson plans or units of curricula for the infusion of computer-assisted instruction in E.S.L.

During 1987-88, the project's computer resource laboratory was in full operation. It contained five computers and three printers, as well as software, books, and curricular materials on E.S.L., English, Spanish, and the content areas. In addition

TABLE 4

Passing Rates for Program Students in Content Area Courses

	Fall		Spring		
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Overall Passing Rate
Mathematics	189	72.0	181	65.7	68.9
Science	136	93.4	134	84.3	88.9
Social Studies	207	80.2	193	85.0	82.5
Overall Passing Rate		80.6		78.0	

- Students met the program objective in both semesters and in all subject areas.

to the Nuevos Horizontes resource laboratory, program students had access to the computer room used by mainstream students.

The Nuevos Horizontes computer resource laboratory provided two main services: (1) remedial assistance on a regular basis to students referred by their teacher at the beginning of each semester; and (2) independent work for students desiring computer-assisted instruction.

The resource room staff developed instructional plans tailored to each student's needs, monitored progress, supplied classroom teachers with progress reports twice a semester, and provided parents with reports once a semester. Independent work took place during lunch or free periods or as part of regularly scheduled classes. The bilingual resource specialist and/or one paraprofessional were present during both types of activity.

Monroe held computer-assisted E.S.L. classes once a week. They used a curriculum developed by the A.P. for E.S.L. and foreign languages in cooperation with the Title VII bilingual resource specialist. This plan, which had been adopted by the Board of Education and disseminated citywide, integrated word processing with E.S.L. instruction.

Finally, the project developed lesson plans infusing computer-assisted instruction in E.S.L. Therefore it appears to have completely realized its four objectives.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project proposed noninstructional objectives in the areas of student attendance, cultural heritage, staff development, and parental involvement.

Attendance

- Participating students will maintain an attendance rate equal to or greater than that of mainstream students.

Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes had a full-time family assistant who contacted parents if a student was absent more than three days in a row, or if a teacher requested her to do so.

The principal said that bilingual students' attendance rates were better than those of mainstream students in all grades. In fact, program students had an average attendance of 91.2 percent in the fall and 89.7 percent in the spring, compared to 71.5 percent for the total school population.

Cultural Heritage

- Participating students will develop and maintain positive self-image and cultural pride by participating in cultural celebrations and student performances.

Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes held several cultural heritage celebrations such as Puerto Rican Discovery Day, Dominican Independence Day, and Pan American Week. In addition, Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes sponsored a "Country of the Month" project, which highlighted the history and culture of a different Latin American country each month.

All of the Spanish courses for native speakers had units on the cultural heritage of Latin America. The more advanced

courses focused on Spanish and Latin American literature. Many of the classroom decorations referred to the history and geography of the countries of Latin America. All these things promoted a sense of belonging and cultural pride.

The project also sought to familiarize students with their urban environment and to develop an awareness of social alternatives and lifestyles different from those typical of the South Bronx.

This year the project initiated "P.N.H. Visits the Big Apple." This activity consisted of lessons on New York City taught in E.S.L. classes and visits to the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, the New York Experience, the World Trade Center, the Staten Island Ferry, and Broadway shows.

The Nuevos Horizontes newsletter, A Bite of the Big Apple, contained theater reviews, poems, short stories, essays, literary critiques, puzzles, interviews with faculty members, and informational articles by students and faculty. An educational assistant was available to help student contributors write their articles.

Staff Development

- One hundred percent of staff members will be fully trained in the educational aspects related to E.S.L., bilingual education, native language arts, and computer education through attendance at workshops, conferences, or courses at institutions of higher education.

Staff development activities during the 1987-88 academic year consisted of faculty conferences, departmental meetings,

enrollment in college courses, and attendance at in-school and out-of-school workshops.

Departmental meetings covered such matters as classroom management, writing skills, learning styles, the mentoring program, and class intervisitation. All project staff members attended these meetings.

Five in-school workshops were held as of January 1988. The project coordinator and the bilingual resource specialist presented the first one, "LEP students in the Mainstream," which was attended by mainstream as well as bilingual program teachers.

Bilingual staff attended two workshops on educational software conducted by the bilingual resource specialist in collaboration with the project director and a teacher of mathematics. The project coordinator presented a demonstration lesson on the bicentennial of the United States Constitution. The social studies A.P. and bilingual social studies teachers attended. Bilingual program teachers and Title VII personnel also attended workshops outside the school, including a Spanish Advanced Placement Conference and a Bronx Technical Assistance Center (TAC) conference on software.

Title VII personnel attended several additional Bronx Technical Assistance Center conferences and symposia, among them a social studies turnkey training session and a Title VII technical assistance workshop. Title VII funds paid for nine staff members to enroll in project-relevant courses at local

colleges and universities.

It was clear that Nuevos Horizontes had a wide range of staff development activities which were non-Title VII and Title VII staff members attended. However, because of the wording of the objective and the lack of attendance rosters OREA cannot state conclusively whether the project met the objective.

Parental Involvement

- The Bilingual Advisory Council will hold at least four meetings during the 1987-88 school year.

The Advisory Council met three times in the fall. A total of 17 parents attended.

Teachers and administrators agreed that the level of parental participation was too low. They said this was mainly due to heavy parental work loads and domestic responsibilities. The bilingual guidance counselor also noted that some parents were shy about attending school activities because their English was poor. One teacher added that parental involvement is alien to the Latin American educational tradition.

Since the project did not supply information on Advisory Council activities in the spring, OREA can not assess whether the project met its parental involvement objective.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the school's long history of bilingual/E.S.L. education and its predominantly Hispanic student body, Proyecto Nuevos Horizontes has been accepted enthusiastically by both students and staff.

Nuevos Horizontes achieved its objectives in the areas of E.S.L., N.L.A., content area subjects, computer-assisted instruction, attendance, and cultural heritage. Despite a great many staff development activities, the lack of data made it impossible to determine whether the project achieved its objective in that area. Similarly, lack of data made it impossible for OREA to determine whether Nuevos Horizontes met its parental involvement objective.

The supportive environment created by Nuevos Horizontes helped ease the process of acculturation, thereby giving students the sense of security they needed. On the other hand, the very fact that the project was so attractive to LEP students may have made some of them reluctant to leave it and be mainstreamed.

The conclusions, based upon the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- To increase contacts and communication between bilingual and mainstream students, the project should consider sponsoring extracurricular activities that would bring together students from both groups.

- Develop ways to motivate students to rapidly enter the mainstream.
- Supply the data needed to evaluate all of the noninstructional objectives.